

By: Senator(s) Michel

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 20

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE CAREER OF RENOWNED GOSPEL ARTIST  
2 AND GRADUATE OF MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND VIRGINIA LEIGH  
3 (GINNY) OWENS AND WELCOMING HER TO MISSISSIPPI ON THE OCCASION OF  
4 "GINNY OWENS' HOMECOMING DAY".

5 WHEREAS, April 7, 2004, has been designated "Ginny Owens'  
6 Homecoming Day" at the Mississippi School for the Blind in  
7 Jackson, Mississippi; and

8 WHEREAS, Virginia Leigh (Ginny) Owens grew up as the oldest  
9 of two children in Jackson, Mississippi, started playing the piano  
10 when she was two years old, and lost her sight to a congenital eye  
11 disease at that time; but for her, music was her hobby, passion  
12 and her way of expressing the thoughts and feelings that she could  
13 not articulate; and

14 WHEREAS, Ginny's academic background in high school and  
15 college demonstrated her dedication to excellence and her interest  
16 in music: Graduated Mississippi School for the Blind, May 1993,  
17 Valedictorian; graduated in Top 10 of Senior Class at Murrah High  
18 School; Recipient of Annie Denman Citizenship Award (Mississippi  
19 Council of the Blind), 1992; selected as one of *The*  
20 *Clarion-Ledger's* Class All-Star Senior Merit Winners; graduated  
21 Belmont University, Nashville, Tennessee, May 1997, with a  
22 Bachelor of Music Degree (Cum Laude); and named to Who's Who in  
23 American Universities and Colleges, 1996-1997; and

24 WHEREAS, when Ginny majored in music at Belmont University in  
25 Nashville, she had every intention of teaching music after  
26 graduation, but instead she was discovered by a record label, and  
27 has spent the past several years traveling and performing for  
28 adoring fans; and

29 WHEREAS, her professional achievements to date follow:

30 First female artist signed to Rocketown Records and sales of  
31 more than 500,000 units worldwide; tours include appearances with  
32 Michael W. Smith, Chris Rice, Rebecca St. James, Derek Webb and  
33 Watermark; her radio singles are: #1 "Free" - Adult Contemporary;  
34 #1 "If You Want Me To" - Adult Contemporary; #1 "I Am Nothing" -  
35 Inspirational; and #3 "I Am" - Adult Contemporary; she was the  
36 featured performer on 2000 Dove Awards live telecast, the featured  
37 performer Lilith Fair (Nashville, Tennessee), the featured  
38 performer Sundance Film Festival and was interviewed twice on  
39 National Public Radio by popular host Liane Hansen; she has  
40 performances and interviews on nationally televised talk shows  
41 "Live with Regis and Kathie Lee" and the "Ainsley Harriott Show"  
42 and an appearance on the CNN "Worldbeat" music program; she was  
43 the Microsoft MSN "Live" chat - featured artist on Website Chat;  
44 and

45 WHEREAS, Ginny's awards include the 2001 Dove Award winner  
46 for Inspirational Song of the Year for "Blessed"; the 2000 Dove  
47 Award winner for New Artist of the Year; and the 2000 Dove Award  
48 winner for Best Enhanced CD; and

49 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the  
50 accomplishments of this young Mississippi artist who has brought  
51 honor to her school, her community and to the State of  
52 Mississippi:

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
54 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend the career of renown gospel  
55 artist and graduate of Mississippi School for the Blind, Virginia  
56 Leigh (Ginny) Owens, and extend to her the best wishes of the  
57 Mississippi Senate as we welcome her on the occasion of "Ginny  
58 Owens' Homecoming Day" on April 7, 2004.

59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
60 Ginny Owens and her family, the Superintendent of the Mississippi

61 School for the Blind and be made available to the Capitol Press  
62 Corps.